

1 EMBRACE SIMPLICITY

Monika Hibbs, who blogs at monikahibbs.com, creates a brand-new display each year. “I reuse certain staples, enlist a streamlined theme, and do just a touch of decorating here and there instead of going all-out in every single room,” she says. “I’ve embraced a less-is-more approach.”



2 OPT FOR GARLAND

To stretch greenery to the max, stock up on garland instead of wreaths. The former is far more versatile—bringing a festive finish to mantels, stair rails, door frames, and tabletops. What’s more, it easily can be twirled up as a wreath. This one above Monika’s fireplace is simply a small loop of garland tied with ribbon and affixed to a nail.

chic ON A Shoestring

Monika Hibbs loves the holidays. Really, truly, genuinely loves them. Each year the Vancouver-based blogger and mom to three little ones whips up a magical holiday scene. Here’s how she created a particularly glam affair—doused in blushing hues—that was low in cost and off the charts in style.

Photography by TRACEY AYTON
Written by CAROLINE MCKENZIE

3 ADD SOME QUIRK

For aesthetic levity, Monika infuses her holiday style with retro quirk. This year, putz houses (pint-size cardboard abodes), below, bring whimsy to her glam decor. Pastel colors and glitter detailing ensure the accessories blend seamlessly.



4 ACCENT WITH RIBBON

Monika mixes up her color scheme by incorporating new ribbon trimmings, above, alongside neutral foundation pieces, like the white stockings. Here, bronze and blush streamers lend affordable flounce to the mantel. Bonus: The ribbons can be used for gift wrapping down the road.

5 RISE TO THE OCCASION

One spot Monika never skips on decorating: the stair banisters. Visible from the living room, kitchen, and front door, they make for a merry look from almost every angle, ensuring plenty of bang for the buck.



6 ADD A PERSONAL TOUCH

Each year, Monika incorporates a subtle, sentimental theme into her lineup. The pinks, blushes, and rose golds carried throughout the decor—not to mention sweet details like this stuffed unicorn, *below left*—are a nod to Monika's young daughter and the arrival of a new baby girl.

7 TRY PILLOW TALK

For an easy means of reinforcing her holiday color palette, Monika always subs in throw pillows that fit the theme, *below middle*. It's a 30-second update that carries her scheme to every corner of her home.

8 FAKE IT FABULOUS

Since she has little ones at home—and the Christmas tree draws them like moths to a flame—Monika skips authentic vintage ornaments in favor of convincing replicas, *below right*. The new iterations tend to be made of plastic (versus paper-thin glass) or felt (versus age-worn cotton) and are less prone to accidents. What's more, the "fakes" usually cost far less.

9 MAKE IT A WHITE CHRISTMAS

Monika opts for an honest-to-goodness flocked tree. (A local Christmas tree farm offers the service, along with stringing the lights, for a small fee.) While an artificial flocked number could be used year after year, Monika prefers the scale (and aroma!) of a freshly cut one. The costs are offset by the need for fewer ornaments—the blanketed look feels full without a bounty of embellishments on every limb.



“Ribbon is the easiest way I know to add polish and personality to holiday decor.”

—MONIKA HIBBS, HOMEOWNER



10 COOK UP A FOCAL POINT

Further proving how you can push garland to the max, Monika utilized a few leftover sprigs to rig up a swag on her range hood, *above*. The unexpected accent draws the eye toward kitchen festivities and lends organic softness to the room's many hard surfaces.

11 EMPLOY AN ENTERTAINING HACK

To streamline holiday entertaining costs, Monika serves a single signature drink, *right*, at her soirees. This fizzy concoction—which includes cranberry juice, sparkling rosé, sugared berries, and ice cubes containing frozen rose petals—produces eye candy almost too pretty to drink. Almost.

“Natural drink embellishments like rose ice cubes are more my style (and budget!) than fancy stirrers.”

—MONIKA HIBBS, HOMEOWNER



12 HAVE FUN WITH FOOD

This simple holiday spread is eye-pleasing in large part because of Monika's savvy attention to detail. The items each include a dash of red (berries, rosé, and candy canes) to complement the pink tones of the overall decor.





13 ORGANIZE THE CHAOS

At the back-door mudroom, a pair of deer antlers (they belong to Monika's husband) are festooned with a wreath that can be reused each year.



14 LET LITTLE SPOTS SHINE

Adding festive embellishments to typically overlooked spots, like this pine wreath, right, adorning the butler's pantry window, makes for an overall jollier house than one single lavish display.

15 GO OUT ON A LEDGE

Don't forget your bookshelves, below left, at the holidays. A lone reindeer figurine and a few sprigs of greenery instantly spruce up this quiet corner.

16 THINK BEYOND THE TREE

Monika tucks little gifts, below right, on shelves and ledges around the house—not just under the tree. The scattered placement infuses the holiday with a bit of scavenger-hunt fun and also lets packages already on hand serve as decorations throughout.



“I let wrapped gifts do double duty as holiday decor.”

—MONIKA HIBBS, HOMEOWNER

For Sources, see page 104.